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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/798,663	03/11/2004	Boyd Willat	29337/PP509A	6308

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EXAMINER

WILLIAMS, MARK A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3676

DATE MAILED: 08/16/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/798,663	WILLAT ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Mark A. Williams	3676	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 3/1/04.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 54-69 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) 64-69 is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 54,55,59,60,62 and 63 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) 56, 57, 58, and 61 is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on 3/1/04 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 7/15/04

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 54, 55, 59, and 60 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ferrara, Jr, US Patent 6,648,535. A cushioning member that may be used with a writing instrument, as known in the art. The cushioning member comprising an elongate body having first and second ends; and a deformable sleeve having a generally tubular base 38 with a first diameter and defining an inner surface engaging the body near the writing mechanism, a generally tubular outer membrane 36 with a second diameter larger than the first diameter positioned generally concentric with the base, wherein respective ends of the base and outer membrane engage to define a cavity 50 there between, a sealable passageway 35 defined between adjacent ends of the tubular base and outer membrane in fluid communication with the cavity, and a formable material disposed in the cavity; see

column 9, lines 13-23. The base and outer membrane are integrally formed from a single piece of material.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 62 and 63 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ferrara. Although the particular claimed manner of sealing is not disclosed by Ferrara, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to make the different portions of the device of whatever form or shape was desired or expedient. A change in form or shape is generally recognized as being within the level of ordinary skill in the art, absent any showing of unexpected results. *In re Dailey et al.*, 149 USPQ 47. Such a modification is not critical to the design and would have produced no unexpected results.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 64-69 are allowed.

6. Claims 56-58 and 61 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

7. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: the prior art of record fails to teach or fairly suggest a writing instrument in the entire claimed combination including a base and outer membrane being integrally formed from a single piece of material with the piece of material comprising an elongate tubular member of flexible material having a first end, second end, a larger diameter portion, and a smaller diameter portion, wherein and an intermediate portion of the smaller diameter portion is folded so that a remainder of the smaller diameter portion passes through the larger diameter portion and the first end is adjacent the second end, thereby to form the base and outer membrane.

Nor does the prior art teach or suggest a writing instrument in the entire claimed combination including in a formable material that holds a deformed shape for at least 5 seconds following release by a user of the outer membrane.

Nor does the prior art teach or suggest a method of forming a tubular sleeve on a writing instrument comprising each of the claimed steps as presented in claim 64.

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 54-63 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. The previously cited reference to Ferrara has been applied.

Conclusion

This action is non-final.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mark A. Williams whose telephone number is (571) 272-7064. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday.

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Mark Williams
7/27/05



Suzanne Dino Barrett
Primary Examiner